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ABSTRACT

Over a 2-year period, several teacher book clubs were studied. Teachers' and preservice teachers' responses to a series of texts that focused on multiculturalism in American society were examined. Twelve elementary school teachers, representing four ethnic groups (European American, Asian American, African American, and Hispanic), volunteered to participate in the book club. Ten preservice teachers, representing four ethnic groups, participated in the preservice teachers' reading discussion group as part of a teacher education course. Teachers read and discussed a collection of multicultural titles including works of Sandra Cisneros, Amy Tan, and Toni Morrison. Sessions were videotaped and analyzed using the Flood and Lapp Coding System. Results indicated different patterns for teachers and student teachers. Student teachers expanded and responded to conversational utterances more often than did teachers. Teachers, however, asked and answered more questions, redirected the discussion and retold parts of the stories more often than student teachers. Both groups believed that they grew in their understanding of sensitivity toward multiculturalism. By talking about the feelings, thoughts and actions of literary characters, participants gained insights about cultures of which they had previously had limited knowledge. (Contains the coding system, 7 tables, 8 figures of data, and 27 references.) (Author/TB)

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READING RESEARCH REPORT NO. 22
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About the National Reading Research Center

The National Reading Research Center (NRRC) is funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research on reading and reading instruction. The NRRC is operated by a consortium of the University of Georgia and the University of Maryland College Park in collaboration with researchers at several institutions nationwide.

The NRRC's mission is to discover and document those conditions in homes, schools, and communities that encourage children to become skilled, enthusiastic, lifelong readers. NRRC researchers are committed to advancing the development of instructional programs sensitive to the cognitive, sociocultural, and motivational factors that affect children's success in reading. NRRC researchers from a variety of disciplines conduct studies with teachers and students from widely diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 classrooms. Research projects deal with the influence of family and family-school interactions on the development of literacy; the interaction of sociocultural factors and motivation to read; the impact of literature-based reading programs on reading achievement; the effects of reading strategies instruction on comprehension and critical thinking in literature, science, and history; the influence of innovative group participation structures on motivation and learning; the potential of computer technology to enhance literacy; and the development of methods and standards for alternative literacy assessments.

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Abstract. *During the past two years, several teacher book clubs have been investigated. Teachers' and preservice teachers' responses to a series of texts that focused on multiculturalism in American society have been examined. Twelve elementary school teachers, representing four ethnic groups (European American, Asian American, African American, and Hispanic) volunteered to participate in the book club. Ten preservice teachers representing four ethnic groups participated in the preservice teachers' reading discussion group as part of a teacher education course. Teachers read and discussed a collection of multicultural titles including the works of Sandra Cisneros, Amy Tan, and Toni Morrison. Sessions were videotaped and analyzed using the Flood and Lapp Coding System. Results indicated different patterns for teachers and student teachers. Student teachers expanded and responded to conversational utterances more often than did teachers. Teachers, however, asked and answered more questions, redirected the discussion and retold parts of the stories more often*

than student teachers. Both groups believed that they grew in their understanding of sensitivity toward multiculturalism.

During the past three years we have been involved in four separate book clubs in which multicultural contemporary fiction was read and discussed by groups of teachers and student teachers within the San Diego Unified School District and at San Diego State University. The purpose of these book clubs was to explore the use of multicultural literature as a means for enhancing awareness about multiculturalism among the teacher participants. We believed that the exploration of themes within books that dealt directly with issues of multiculturalism in American society would enhance the participant's own "ways of knowing" (insights based on previous experiences) about a series of multicultural concerns that we shared, for example, feelings about other cultures, knowledge about cultures, idiosyncrasies within cultures, and appropriate instruction for children from a wide variety of cultures.

Our first book club originated in response to a concern among the teachers and principal at Hoover High School, a large inner city school with a rich mixture of 2,000 multiethnic, multicultural students. The student population at Hoover mirrored the demographic profile of many urban high schools throughout the United States. The student population was split among four ethnic groups: 36% Indochinese, 22% Mexican American, 21% European American, and 20% African American. The teacher population was far less diverse: 80% European American, 9% African American, 8% Mexican American, and 3% Asian American.

The discrepancy between the ethnic composition of the students and the teachers became a cause for concern for many teachers. As the student population became more diverse, the teachers wanted to better understand the cultural backgrounds of their students. After exploring several options, they decided to start a book club in which they would read and discuss literature written by authors representing the same ethnicities and cultures as their students. They further decided that they would choose books that focused upon the dilemmas characters face as they try to live in a multicultural society.

Twelve teachers, their principal, and two university-based teachers formed this first book club and started reading and discussing books by and about Mexican Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and European Americans. We read books by Sandra Cisneros, Gary Soto, Toni Morrison, Amy Tan, Zora Neale Hurston, Robert Cormier, and Francisco Jimenez.

The three other book clubs formed after the Hoover High School Club had somewhat different origins. The second book club consisted of eight elementary teachers at Oak Park Elementary School, their principal, assistant principal, resource teacher, two instructional aides, and two university-based teachers. The student population at Oak Park Elementary School is similar to Hoover High School's with slightly more African Americans (28%) and slightly fewer Indochinese (29%). The teacher population paralleled the Hoover High School teacher population (80% European American). This book club differed from the first one in that the teachers were invited to participate by their principal who had heard about the Hoover

High School book club. The teachers had some reservations and some apprehension about exposing their own cultural beliefs to their colleagues and the appropriateness of their instruction, but their fears soon abated as they started attending the meetings. During the following months, they became quite involved in the discussions, changing from novice to experienced responders.

The third and fourth book clubs were significantly different from the first two. These book clubs were part of the preservice education program at San Diego State University for students who were preparing to be either secondary or elementary teachers. (Members of the third book club group were secondary student teachers and members of the fourth were elementary student teachers.) Student teachers were invited to participate in these book clubs as an enrichment to their student teaching experience. In each of these book clubs, fourteen student teachers, representing a variety of ethnic/cultural backgrounds (18 European American, 3 African American, 5 Mexican American, and 2 Indochinese) read and discussed a series of short stories by Cisneros, Soto, Jimenez, Cormier, and Tan.

Why Book Clubs?

We decided to try a book club approach for several reasons. First, we discovered that in the past few years, book clubs have been growing in popularity in the general public. For example, the March 11, 1990 *Chicago Sun-Times* reported "These days, it's positively *de riguer* among baby-boom intelligentsia to carve out a few hours once a month to pick apart a piece of literature and a buffet table" and the March 13, 1992 edition of the *New York Times* reported on the efforts of one magazine to develop reading discussion groups among its readers by providing cards inside one edition of the magazine that readers could return. "More than 8,200 readers filled out a card inside that issue. The magazine matched them up by ZIP code, establishing some 500 salons (reading discussion groups)" (Rabinovitz, 1992).

We also decided to use a book club format because previous studies reported success with book clubs in general and multicultural bookclubs in specific. Comments from teacher participants in other book clubs in which multicultural literature was read and discussed demonstrated new multicultural insights. One elementary teacher who participated in a multicultural book group focusing on children's literature stated: "I gained a broader understanding of other cultures" and "a respect for other life styles." (Bealor, 1992). In another study in which student teachers read contemporary multicultural works, one student commented: "I need to realize and deal with the fact that my students may be coming from a completely different place than I am. I must see that in order to teach them effectively." (Hansing-Krening, 1992).

In a related study European American student teachers read African American children's literature to familiarize themselves with the culture of the students with whom they would be working. Dana (1991) found in all cases her student teachers commented that they had learned something about other cultures that would help them as they worked in the classroom.

Third, we used the book club format because it provided an opportunity for teachers to

participate in literature discussions in which personal response was valued and encouraged. Several researchers have noted that reading and discussing literature helps participants grow professionally in their understanding of their own literacy skills as well as their teaching skills (Zucanella, 1991). In the past, many teachers lacked book discussion experience because their high school and college instructors used the lecture method. By participating in literature discussion groups, Bealor (1992) found that teachers quickly moved from not knowing what to talk about to requesting more time for discussion. In a set of related studies, Fisher and Shapiro (1992) and Hansing-Krening (1992) found that teachers who had previous experience with book clubs often sparked the discussion and acted as models for teachers who had little experience with discussion.

Empowering Active Thinking Through Discussion

As teachers hear life stories from one another and as they encourage one another in book club discussions, a camaraderie of trust and understanding builds among them and carries over to other activities at the school site (Bealor, 1992). Through book clubs, participants are able to reflect on the ways they think, interpret, and respond to various texts. During these discussions, teachers often reflect upon issues that are critical to their own development as educators. Maitlin and Short (1991) and Sanacore (1993), in their examination of study groups, have noted a similar phenomenon in which teachers become empowered through discussion to become active thinkers, and to challenge their own beliefs.

Teacher discussion groups are not a new phenomenon; for many years they have been effective vehicles for reflection and change (O'Flahavan, Erting, Marks Mintz, and Wiencek, 1992). The Philadelphia Teachers' Learning Cooperative (Buchanan, in press), the Teacher Lore project (Ayers and Schubert, in press), and Kathy Short's (1992) Study Group Experiences all illustrate the power that comes to teachers when they work together, share their expertise with one another and receive support from one another in their efforts to affect positive change within their school communities.

In their studies, Grossman and Shulman (in press) speak specifically to the need for discussion groups in the preparation of future English teachers. They argue that teachers need to read and talk about many different kinds of texts to meet the demands of teaching literature. They argue that in the process of reading and talking, teachers develop new understanding and that a book club can provide good places for discussing these thoughts. They further explain that teachers need to go beyond their own understanding as they work with students from a variety of backgrounds. Several researchers (Dana, 1991; Flood and Lapp, 1994) argue that when teachers of different backgrounds read stories together they will better understand how students of different cultural groups interpret stories.

Several teacher development projects have as their goal the transmission of ideas across groups. Buchanan (in press), in describing the Philadelphia Teachers' Learning Cooperative, speaks of the "knowledge of one generation of teachers to be passed on to another." The goal of the Teacher Lore project is to "capture the

discoveries of teachers and their insights to enable them to be shared with other teachers." (Ayers and Schubert, in press). In book clubs, knowledge flows across generations, across ethnic groups, and between the genders as stories are interpreted and meaning is constructed. Depending on the focus of the story, different group members can take on the role of expert (Flood, Lapp, Alvarez, Romero, and Ranck-Buhr, 1993). Over a period of time all members of the group have the opportunity to provide and receive insights about the literature as well as about themselves.

Focus of Our Study

Four issues were investigated in this study: (a) how participants come to know and grow in their knowledge of multiculturalism, (b) how participants articulate knowledge about the ways in which they read and respond to stories, (c) how participants transform experience as active participants in a book club to actions within their own classrooms, and (d) how participants communicate with their peers in a discussion group.

METHOD

Participants

Twelve high school teachers representing six content areas (English, social studies, math, business, science, and mathematics) and four ethnic groups (Asian American, African American, European American and Mexican American) volunteered to participate in one book club. The teachers were all from Hoover High School, a large, urban school of 2000 students who represented a variety of cultures and twenty-two different languages.

Two groups of student teachers of fourteen each (one elementary, one secondary) representing four ethnic groups (African American, Mexican American, European American and Asian American) participated in the student teachers' reading discussion group as part of a teacher education preparation program at San Diego State University.

Twelve elementary teachers at Oak Park Elementary School, two instructional aides, their principal, and two university-based teachers representing four ethnic backgrounds (African American, European American, Mexican American and Asian American) participated in a teacher book club which was initiated by the principal of the school.

Procedure

Before attending the discussion group, participants read selected texts from a collection of multicultural readings that dealt specifically with the theme of multiculturalism in American society. The reading discussion groups met for one hour every four to six weeks during the fall and spring semesters of the school year. Before each discussion session, participants read the same piece of multicultural fiction and kept a response journal. During the sessions, members generally spent the first ten minutes sharing journal entries. After the sharing, if the selected text was short (less than 5 pages), a volunteer (or volunteers) read the selection aloud. After the reading, the group talked freely about their impressions of the text. Once everyone had the opportunity to share and discuss what they felt was important

about the text, additional time (approximately 10 minutes) was allotted for a second journal entry to provide opportunities for reflection on how the discussion may have affected interpretation of the reading.

The number of stories discussed in each session was determined by the amount of time that was available. We felt it was important to keep the structure of the book club sessions open to allow participants to cover all the issues they felt were relevant to a text.

Selection of books was completed in several steps with all members of the groups participating in the selection process. The group decided upon the type of materials they wanted to read. In deciding the texts they would read, text length was an important consideration for everyone. We found short books or short stories worked best for three reasons: the group could discuss several works during one meeting, they were short enough to be read in one sitting, and they covered a wide variety of topics. We used the following books and stories in our book club:

Woman Hollering Creek by Sandra Cisneros

House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison

Their Eyes were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston

The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan

Cormier, R. (1980). "The Mustache" from *Eight Plus One*. NY: Pantheon Books, Random House.

Jimenez, F. (1973). "The Circuit," *Arizona Quarterly*, Autumn.

Myers, W. D. (1983). "The Treasure of Lemon Brown," *Boys Life*.

Salinas, M. (1984). "The Scholarship Jacket," *Nosotras: Latina Literature Today*. Tempe, AZ: Bilingual Press.

Instruments

Each session was videotaped and analyzed using two measures: (a) a content analysis of conversation turns and (b) the Flood and Lapp (1993) coding system.

The Flood and Lapp Coding System

In our first studies of literature discussion groups, we used Marshall's (1989) coding system which was developed for analyzing discussions in secondary school classrooms. We found that his coding system was useful for comparing our book clubs to previous book club studies. However, because the purposes of our books clubs were very different from his purposes, we saw the need to develop a new coding system which would allow us to examine the conversation turns that took place in our book club within our framework for studying teachers' ways of knowing about multiculturalism, literacy processing, and teaching and learning. Marshall's system only looked at the issues of communication processes among participants.

The Flood and Lapp system provides for the coding of two discrete discourse factors: (a) the semantic content of each comment, and (b) the communication procedures that are used by speakers and listeners. Each comment was doubly coded; once for content and once for communication procedure.

In the discourse category of content, comments were coded by the following five domains: teaching/learning, literacy processing, multicultural, gender, and literary stylistic issues. In the communication category, comments were coded as one of ten procedures: agree, maintain, expand, encourage, question, answer, direct, redirect, retell, respond. The coding system is presented in Tables 1 and 2.

RESULTS

Focus of Our Studies

As we studied our book clubs, we focused on teachers' ways of knowing, specifically examining four issues: (a) how we come to know and grow in our knowledge of multiculturalism, (b) how we articulate our knowledge about the ways in which we read and respond to stories, (c) how we transform our experience as active participants in a book club to actions within our own classrooms, and (d) how we communicate with our peers in a discussion group.

Content of Comments by Participants

Both groups of participants, the teachers and student teachers, commented upon our focus issues. The distribution of comments within these categories is as follows: 28% of the domain-specific comments were about multiculturalism, 9% were about teaching and learning, and 6% were about literary response/literacy processing.

Multiculturalism

Our book clubs represented ethnically diverse groups of teachers. Through their interactions with the text and with one another, they began to develop an awareness of similarities between people despite their different cultures and ethnicities.

In some instances, members of the group were of the same ethnic group as the author of the selected text. This situation provided unique opportunities for these individuals to choose whether they wanted to play the role of the "expert," interjecting information based on their experiences as members of a particular cultural group, or whether they wanted to play the role of group member. It also provided opportunities for other participants to gain further insight into unique aspects of other cultures by requesting information from the experts as the following example illustrates:

A: (Hispanic, female, English teacher) *Can I . . . um . . . interject just one little thing about those candies that are cone-shaped. I don't know how many of you have ever seen those . . . .*

B: (European American, male, math teacher) *I've never seen those.*

A: *. . . but they're rainbow colored and in Spanish they're called* pidoleans . . . .

B: Pidoleans?

A: *They were always sold in my neighborhood. There would be this man, with this cardboard thing with holes in 'em, and the pidoleans would be for sale. And so that would be . . . . Talk about a familiar image. Just like you mentioned. I can just see that hard candy. You could never chew it. It was to be licked.*

Table 1. Flood and Lapp Coding System — Semantic Content of Each Comment

Communication Procedures

1. *agree* - comment by one participant that shows agreement with the comment or viewpoint of another participant
2. *maintain* - comment that keeps the conversation going on the same topic
3. *expand* - comment that builds on the previous conversation turn and adds additional information or insights
4. *encourage* - comment by one participant that supports another participant to continue the conversation
5. *question* - direct question by one participant to another participant or to the whole group
6. *answer* - comment that is an answer to a direct question by another participant
7. *direct* - comment that changes the direction of the conversation to a new topic
8. *redirect* - comment that takes the conversation back to a former topic of discussion
9. *retell* - comment that retells a portion of the story under discussion
10. *respond* - comment that is a reaction to the previous conversation turn

Thinking Processes

1. *synthesis* - Comment that brings together several issues under discussion
2. *elaboration* - comment that elaborates on what another participant has said
3. *evaluation* - comment that contains a judgment
4. *explanation* - factual comment that helps to clarify
5. *conclusion* - comment that contains opinion
6. *interpretation* - comment that explains what another participant has said previously
7. *application* - comment that shows the practical application to other information

Sources of Comments

1. *prior knowledge of self* - comment is based on knowledge that participant has other than from the text
2. *prior knowledge of text* - comment is based on knowledge that participant has of text in general, not necessarily the particular text under discussion
3. *text memory* - comment is based on the text that is under discussion
4. *text topic* - comment is based on the same topic that the text is about
5. *text rereading* - comment includes the participant reading a portion of the text

The following subcategories were coded along with the sources of comments:

- inferred - participant did not refer to the source of information or opinion in the comment
- stated - participant referred to the source of information or opinion in the comment

Other participants were able to see similarities between experiences in their own lives and experiences of characters in the reading selections regardless of cultural backgrounds. Because of this, we coded their comments as comments about *text* or *self*. Although the text influenced all responses, when the participant's discussion focused primarily on personal experiences which were similar to those of the characters, we coded these as *self*. When the

Table 2. Flood and Lapp Coding System — Communication Procedures Used by Speakers and Listeners

Domain 1: Teaching/Learning

1. *implementation* - comment pertains to implementing teaching techniques or using materials in the classroom
2. *management* - comment pertains to managing students or materials in the classroom
3. *assessment* - comment pertains to assessing students in the classroom

The following subcategories were coded along with the three areas above:

- purpose/goals
- grouping
- physical arrangement
- materials
- participants

Domain 2: Literacy Processing

1. *text* - comment shows the speaker has gained insight into his/her understanding of author and/or comment
2. *self* - comment shows the speaker is becoming metacognitive about his/her own study of literature

The following subcategories were coded along with "self":

- thinking - comment refers to speaker's own thought process in coming to a new understanding
- documenting - speaker specifically explains how he/she arrived at the new understanding
- social context - comment refers to the influence of the discussion group on the speaker coming to a new understanding

Domain 3: Multicultural

1. *text* - comment refers to the text that is under discussion
2. *self* - comment refers to the speaker's personal experience

The following subcategories were coded along with the two areas above:

- "my" culture - comment refers to the culture of the speaker
- "other's" culture in the text - comment refers to the culture(s) in the text under discussion
- universal - comment refers to culture in general, not one particular culture
- "they" comment - comment groups members of a culture together in broad generalities or stereotypes

Domain 4: Gender

1. *male* - comment refers to attitude or trait of males
2. *female* - comment refers to attitude or trait of females

Domain 5: Literary/Stylistic Issues

Comments that refer to style of the text are coded using the following characteristics:

- *theme*
- *plot*
- *setting*
- *characters*
- *conflict*
- *author's craft*

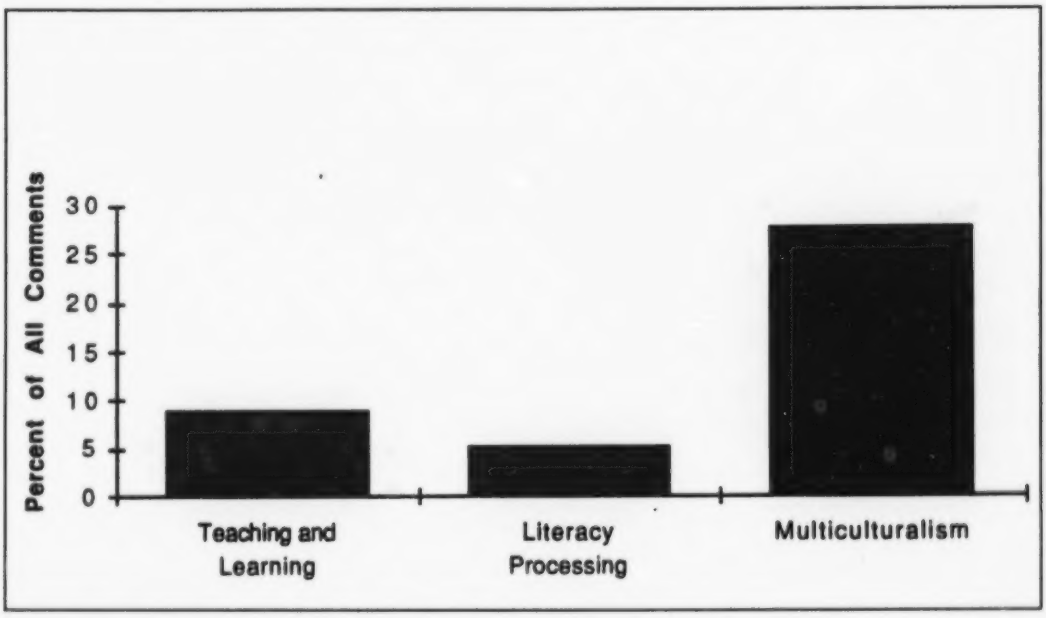

Figure 1. Domain-Specific Comments

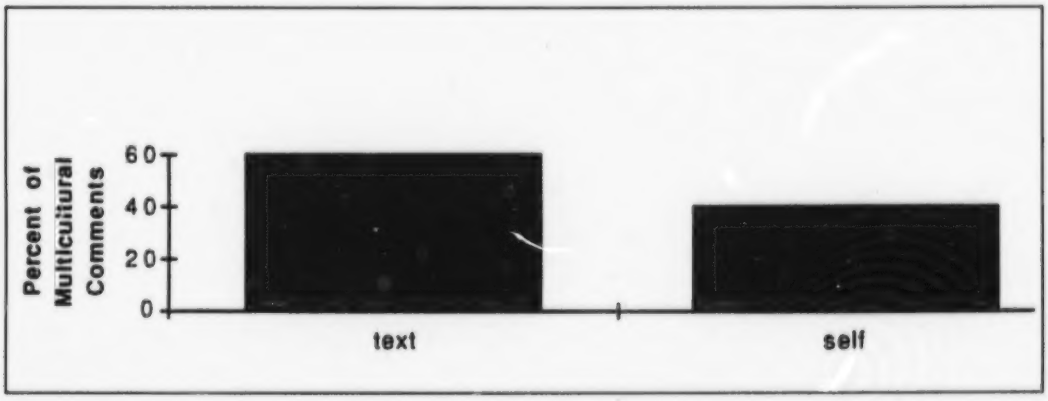

Figure 2. Domain-Specific: Multicultural

participant talked more about the character's experiences we coded these as comments *text* based. Sixty percent of the multicultural comments were coded as text based (see Figure 2).

The following quotes are examples of a *text* based response:

Japanese American, female secondary science student teacher—after reading *The Scholarship Jacket* by Marta Salinas

One of the messages I saw in this story was that parents will always do what they feel is right for their child. They always want what is best for their children. I see this happening in my class regardless of socioeconomics.

Greg's father wanted him to study harder and do better in school because he felt that an education is the most important thing that will help a person in the future. But Greg failed to realize that fact. He was more interested in playing for the Community Center team. To Greg, that was the most important aspect of his life at that time. Obviously, Greg and his father have a difference of opinion and perception of what is important. To the son, athletics was important. To the father, school and education had to take priority. I see parents every day trying to share similar insights with their children. The lucky children are the ones who can hear their parents' hopes and learn from their experiences.

Hispanic, male, elementary teacher—after reading *The Treasure of Lemon Brown* by Walter Dean Myers

This story was about treasures that peopl have inside them. It is about identity and importance of loving yourself and loving your family. This story relates to all of us. The old man in the story didn't have any money or valuables of worth to anybody. He had news clippings and mementos that showed his worth and he knew they were worth something because his son had carried them with him.

In contrast, the following four examples describe experiences that participants had which were similar to experiences of one of the characters in the story. The text seems to serve as the stimulant for each participant's response. These responses were coded as *self*. As illustrated in Figure 2, these comments accounted for 40% of the multicultural responses.

African American, male, secondary English teacher—after reading *Eleven* by Sandra Cisneros

When she talks about the sweater, it reminded me of my cousin and I. We grew up together. I got sweaters from my aunt and my mom and they were really ugly sweaters. And we had to put them on and go to school. We had to walk a little distance out in the country from our home to the road, so we hid them in the woods and got on the school bus and picked them up on the way home.

Mexican American, male, elementary student teacher—after reading *Eleven* by Sandra Cisnernos

Eleven *struck me as a day in the life of just about any child. Most children—rich or poor—have some knowledge of their birthday*

and the ramifications of this day. The protagonist in this story reminded me of myself when I was at a certain birthday. I don't know if it was when I was eleven, but my expectations for how the day of my birthday would run were very high. I still at twenty-two often expect that more should happen than really does. I'm just old enough now not to let my friends and family know that I'm disappointed. I'd be too embarrassed to let them know. That's the difference between eleven and twenty-two.

European American, male, secondary social science student teacher—after reading *The Scholarship Jacket* by Marta Salinas

I almost wish I hadn't read this story. There were so many times when I had the same dread of asking my mother for money for a school project. Even the twenty-five cents to join the French Club. Who knows how many things I said "no" to and forgot because they cost too much. I love the idea of a scholarship jacket. I remember how proud I was of my brother for getting a "letter" in singing!

Asian American, female, secondary science teacher—after reading *The Scholarship Jacket* by Marta Salinas

This piece made me think about all of the times I have really strived to accomplish some thing. I have usually gotten everything I have worked hard to get, and I don't have experience with something as precious as Martha's scholarship jacket taken from me. I can identify with her because sometimes I felt as though I did not "fit in" with other kids. I also got much of my self-esteem from doing well in school. It is also hard to be at her age and in between two cultures and feeling as if the "mainstream" society doesn't really understand or have sensitivity to your culture and ancestry.

These examples suggest that readers can transcend cultural and gender boundaries and make connections with other cultural groups and genders through common experiences. It is interesting that participants were able to cross cultural lines to see similarities in their own lives even when the culture of the character in the story was not the same as their own.

Although these examples illustrate the comments of both elementary and secondary teachers as well as student teachers, Figure 3 shows that 80% of the elementary teachers' and students teachers' comments were about the text while the secondary teachers' comments were evenly split between the text and self. We believe this occurred because elementary teachers as a group spend more time sharing literature in their classrooms with children. They have experience moving back and forth between the text and self. In our earlier studies of book club participation (Flood et al., 1993), we found that the length of membership in the book club influenced the type of comments participants made. Many participants' responses, while initiated by their text reading, were primarily about their personal experiences. As their length of time in the book club increased, they focused more on comparisons across texts.

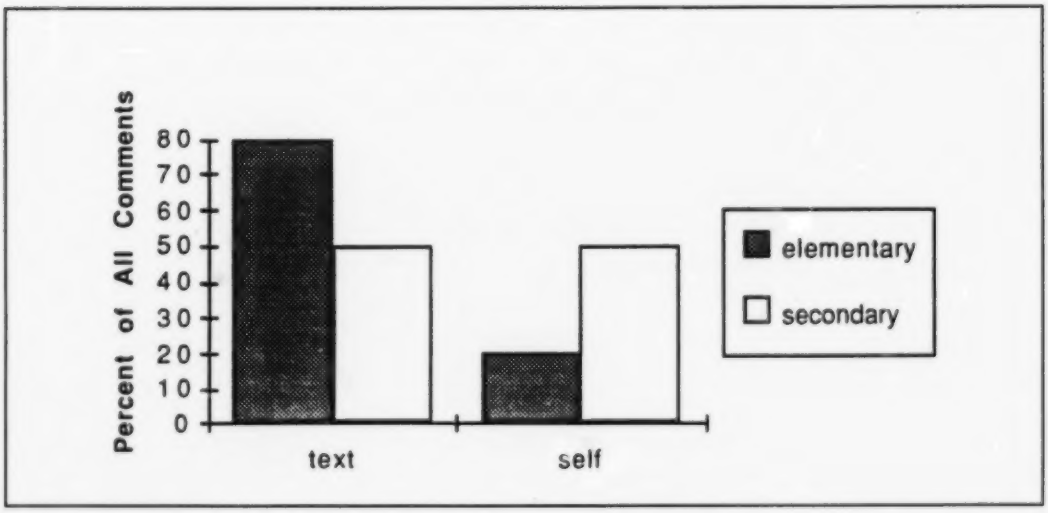

Figure 3. Multicultural: Elementary and Secondary Participants' Comments

TRANSFORMING BOOK CLUB EXPERIENCES INTO CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

Teaching and Learning

Our second focus question was about teaching and learning. We wondered to what degree teachers and student teachers transform the understandings they have acquired from book clubs into actual classroom instruction.

As noted in the Flood and Lapp coding system, domain-specific comments about teaching and learning were subdivided into the following three categories:

1. *implementation* - comment pertains to implementing teaching techniques or materials in the classroom

2. *management* - comment pertains to managing students or materials in the classroom

3. *assessment* - comment pertains to assessing students in the classroom

As illustrated by Figure 4, classroom teachers did not talk about the classroom implementation of the insights they gained from book club discussions. Student teachers talked mostly about the implementation of strategies for teaching literature.

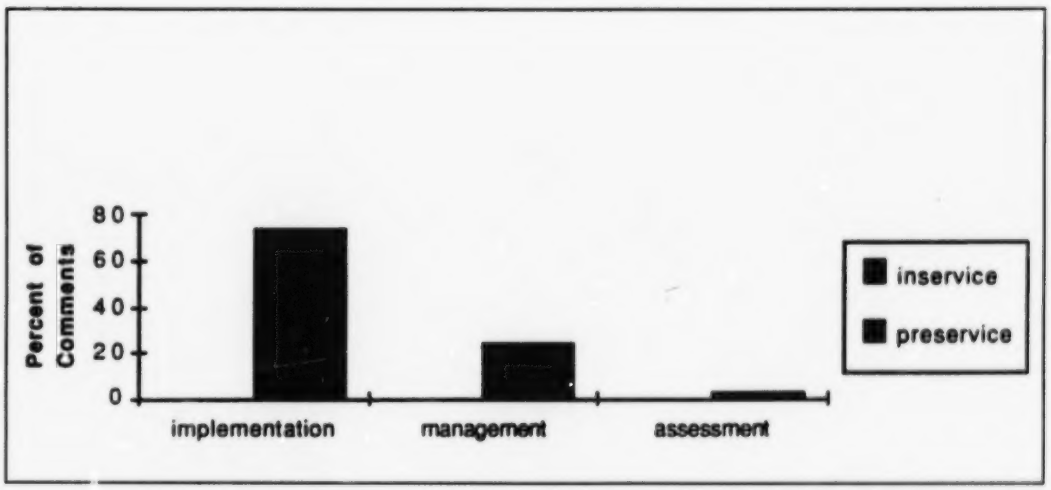

Figure 4. Domain-Specific Comments About Teaching and Learning: Preservice and Inservice Participants

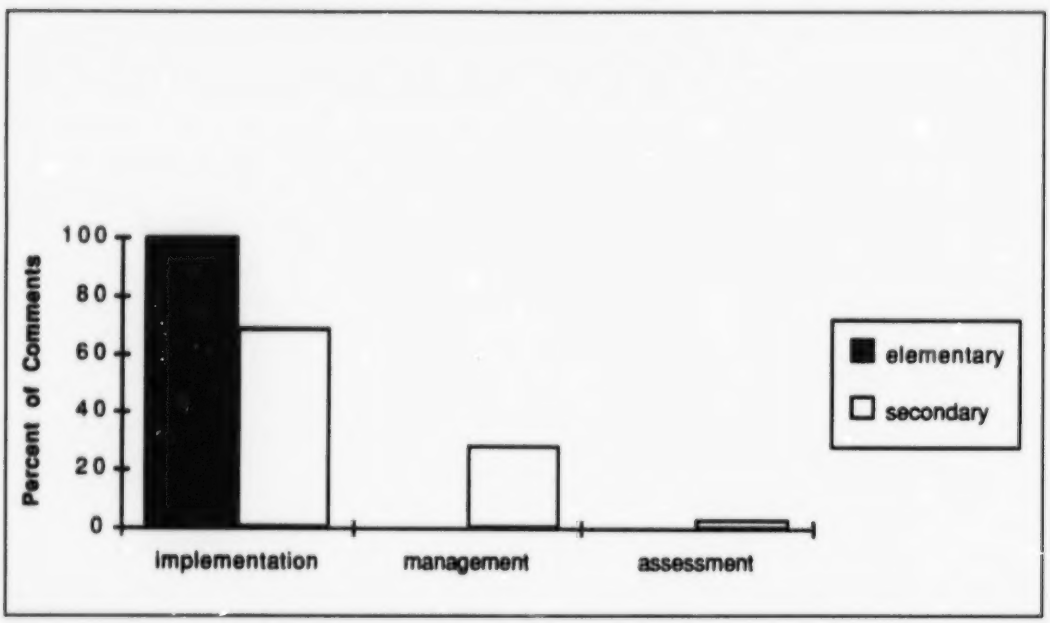

Figure 5. Domain-Specific Comments About Teaching and Learning: Elementary and Secondary Participants

A larger percentage of elementary than secondary student teachers developed insights regarding the implementation of teaching and learning as indicated in Figure 5.

The following responses illustrate these findings:

European American, female, elementary student teacher

I think booktalks are good because they allow people to share ideas and insights about texts. When ideas are shared, I believe that perceptions are expanded. Booktalks could be used in my classroom (kindergarten) to expand ideas about the text, to help improve learning strategies, as a springboard for journal experiences, etc. Booktalks are great for all levels. They just have to be varied in activity and focus depending upon the level of sophistication of the reader.

African American, female, student teacher

I could use booktalks in the classroom to effectively draw out some of the more shy students. Most people are more comfortable talking in a smaller group than in front of a whole class.

We believe that the student teachers thought about classroom implementation because we prodded them to do so. All of the elementary student teachers viewed themselves as literature teachers. This was an unfamiliar role for many of the secondary student teachers who were preparing to teach in other content areas and initially viewed literature within the domain of the English teacher. In the teacher book club, teachers often saw the time spent reading and talking about the texts as "their" time, time spent enjoying a good story and a good conversation. These results suggest that unless encouraged to do so, teachers may not naturally discuss the transfer of insights gained during book club to instructional situations. We do believe that the teachers did make use of some of their book club insights because at least two have begun book clubs with their own students.

Figure 6 shows that when discussing implementation procedures the elementary student teachers primarily focused on their students (participants) and the purpose of the instruction.

The following responses illustrate these findings:

European American, female, elementary student teacher

The book club has caused me to be more open, not to prejudge. These are things that I thought I wasn't doing, but I do—maybe not as much as I think I do. Look at each child as an individual. Try to learn about the child's personal background and culture. Not all Hispanic children have uneducated parents. That is not something I really think but I am using it as an example. Always keep on learning! Reading and talking about other cultures is making me do so.

Asian American, male, elementary student teacher

My children can easily participate in a booktalk. They needed some initial guidance, but I think they are able to discuss feelings and apply literature to personal experiences.

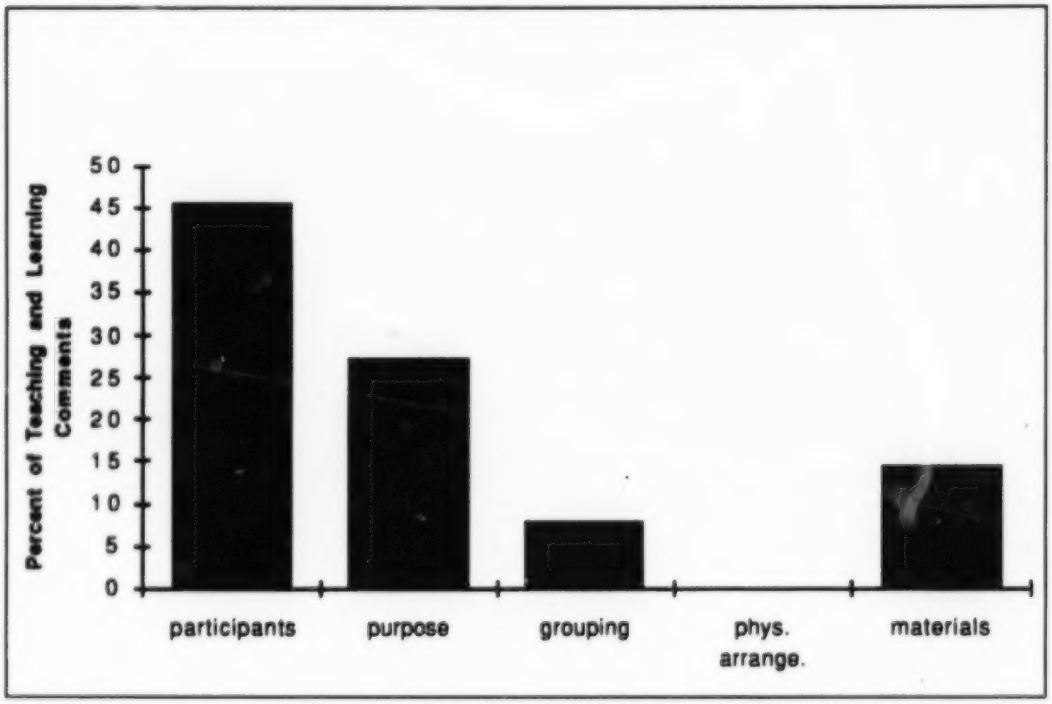

Figure 6. Domain-Specific Comments: Subcategories of Teaching and Learning

Literacy Processing/Literary Responding

Our third focus was on the literacy processing/literary responding of the book club participants.

There is evidence that participants began to become metacognitive about their own literacy processing as they discussed the works. They began to analyze the ways in which they derived meaning from the text and thought about the ways the discussions changed their understanding. The following example illustrates this point:

A: (European American, male, social studies teacher) *I read it and I had some feelings. I read it again. I didn't write anything right away. I read it again. Then I wrote. I just wanted it to kinda work. I don't know if it was the mood I was in or what, I had this incredible opening of my childhood psyche by reading this. People would say this is Hispanic. You're not Hispanic. But I think it transcended all that.*

It was almost a parallel, I was reading the story as a story, fascinating and well

Table 3. Communication Procedures of Inservice Teachers and Student Teachers (Percent of All Comments)

Communication Procedure	Teachers	Student Teachers
agree	3%	4%
maintain	19%	9%
expand	32%	24%
encourage	0%	1%
question	17%	18%
answer	18%	19%
direct	0%	2%
redirect	7%	5%
retell	0%	0%
respond	4%	17%

done, but I was . . . I was living along with some of the things that brought back memories of a kid. I was telling this girl, I was living with my grandma who was Yugoslavian. The similarities with almost the classic grandma were just incredible . . . . that's the beauty of reading, we can stop and go back.

B: (European American, male, researcher) *I was most struck that you read it, you thought about it, you read it again, and you thought about it again.*

A: *That's unusual too and I am not just saying that. Something just kept pulling me back . . . I don't know, 'cause I'm a social studies guy, if this is just a great writer. It worked for me. There's just so much there . . . the selection transcends racial and ethnic boundaries.*

In this example, the participant has begun to realize that through literature it is possible to develop personal understanding and expand one's views of other cultures—to see similarities between different cultural groups. In addition, he began to think about and analyze his own literacy processing which allowed him to make connections between his life and the text. Other participants saw the "realities" of their own culture in the readings and made connections from the text to their own lives as shown in the following example:

Hispanic, female, English teacher

All that discipline stuff that happens in the story is very typical, certainly in Hispanic families . . . there is something there that is particular to certain cultures.

This example also illustrates the symbiotic relationship of literacy processing/literary responding and reflections on multiculturalism. This participant contemplated her ability to connect with the text through the commonalities that she shares with the culture represented in the selection. See Table 3.

Table 4. Discussion Comparisons Resulting from Book Club Conversations

African American, female, student teacher—after reading *Eleven* by Sandra Cisneros

Before Discussion:	After Discussion
I feel sorry for Rachel. This is supposed to be a happy day.	*How do you motivate a child? Let them know you have high expectations. Try to see the positive from everyone's situation. Teach children to* use what they have! *My view of the character did not change but my insight into how others have experienced similar life experiences helped to expand my knowledge.* *Since we are unable to know where others come from, it is so helpful to see a text through someone else's eyes. Learning about other's life experiences can only deepen my perceptions, and enable me to maybe look more closely at a student who I may be judging incorrectly. Helps us to validate other's opinions.*

European American, male, student teacher—after reading *The Circuit* by Francisco Jimenez

Before Discussion	After Discussion
I was excited for the boy when he connected with the teacher (Mr. Lema) and had found a subject. music, that he was excited to learn. He looked forward to school, but could not because he had to help support the family financially. I was very disappointed when he had to leave—my heart sank when his did. And I wondered if he would ever really connect with anyone again—such as a teacher, counselor, friend—someone outside of the family	*After the discussion, I feel better about the boy because I now feel he had such a strong, close, and proud family, that he would "go with the flow." It may have been heart-breaking at first when he knew they were moving again, but he enjoyed school and has the support of his family to finish school. So then, after finishing his responsibilities to the family during a harvest season, he will go to school.* *Book Clubs are enlightening (at least for me it is). I learned a lot about the Hispanic migrant worker culture from our conversations. Everyone is given a chance to give their perspective and the listeners learn from the other perspectives. I have enjoyed hearing from the other people in the club and have gained new insight into their lives.* *With students, having them share experiences and ideas opens the eyes to others around them. There is especially a lot to gain with such a wide variety of backgrounds and nationalities. It builds on conversational skills (listening) and builds self-esteem (what I have to say is important).*

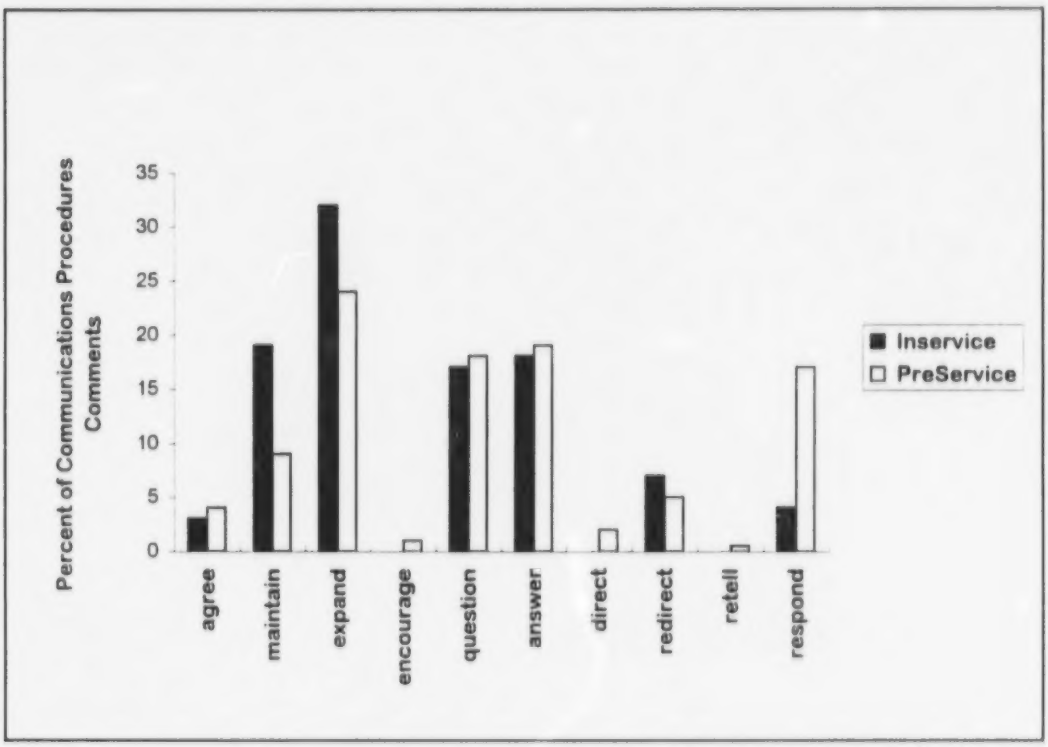

Figure 7. Communication Procedures: Inservice and Preservice Participants

Participants were always asked to write in their journals before and after book club conversations. The examples shown in Table 4 illustrate the change in two student teachers' thoughts before and after taking part in a book club discussion. Their journal entries show how they reflected upon their own processing.

Communication Procedures

Our fourth and final focus was on the ways our participants communicated with their peers.

The communication procedures that participants used have been grouped together and presented as a percentage of their total comments in Table 3. The most frequent procedure used by both the teachers and the student teachers was the "expand" procedure in which participants made comments that built upon the previous conversation turn and added information or insight to the original comment. This procedure accounted for almost one-third of all of the comments made by teachers and one-fourth of all of the comments made by student

Table 5. Communication Procedures of Elementary and Secondary Teachers (Percent of Comments)

Communication Procedure	Elementary Teachers	Secondary Teachers
agree	6%	4%
maintain	6%	10%
expand	29%	23%
encourage	2%	1%
question	18%	17%
answer	17%	18%
direct	2%	4%
redirect	3%	4%
retell	0%	0%
respond	9%	18%

teachers. The communicative procedures of questioning and answering were the next more frequent procedures. Together these three procedures accounted for two-thirds of the teachers' comments and 60% of the student teachers' comments. The student teachers' comments were coded as "respond" four times more often than the teachers'. These comments are reactions to the previous speaker's comments, often taking the form of "filler" utterances such as "hmmm," "oh," "interesting." This seems consistent with student teachers' behaviors throughout the sessions—they seemed to want to avoid pauses, and they often seemed to want to support a colleague without doing so in a formal manner. The data is further illustrated in Figure 7.

The communication procedures were further analyzed by the level at which the teachers and student teachers taught (elementary and secondary). On the whole, there were few differences between the groups. The only categories with appreciable differences were "maintain" and "respond." Secondary teachers used these communication procedures almost twice as often as elementary teachers (see Table 5 and Figure 8).

Participants' thinking processes during book club discussions are presented in Table 6. The teachers elaborated twice as often as the student teachers; this was their most common thinking process followed by explaining. Taken together, these two thought processes accounted for 58% of the comments. The student teachers concluded far more often than the teachers (20% vs. 10%).

As we probed for the sources of our participants' comments, we found few differences between the teachers and student teachers (see Table 7).

DISCUSSION

"Book clubs are effective, especially for me." This statement, made by 1 of the 56 book club participants, reflects the positive attitude held by the other 55 elementary, secondary, and university teachers, student teachers,

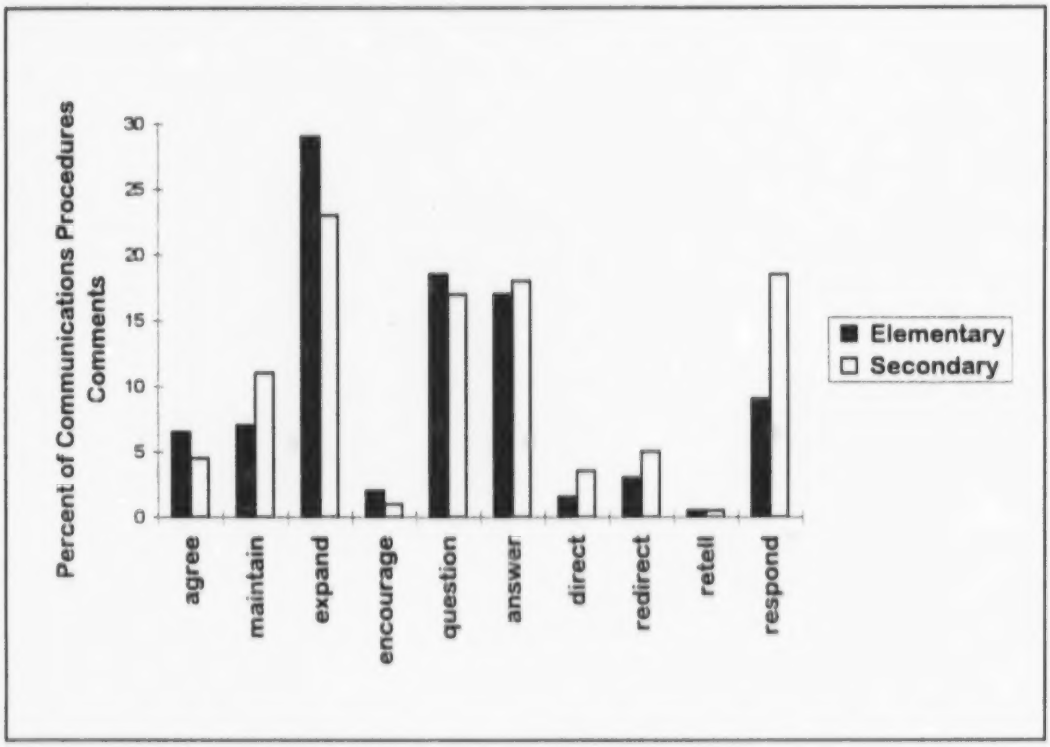

Figure 8. Communication Procedures: Elementary and Secondary

principals, and instructional aides who participated in this study.

The study was designed to gain insights regarding teachers' ways of knowing about: (a) growth in their knowledge of multiculturalism, (b) their inclination to transform newly acquired insights gained through book clubs into their classrooms, (c) their literacy processing/literary responding of stories, and (d) the ways in which they communicated with their peers in a book club setting.

Study participants represented four primary cultural groups: European American, Mexican American, African American, and Asian American. All participants except the university teachers were part of one of four book clubs which met for 1 hour every 4 to 6 weeks during two consecutive 15-week semesters. The university teachers were members of each of the book clubs.

The findings from this study suggest that this was a positive experience for all participants.

Table 6. Participants' Thinking Processes

	Student Teachers	Teachers
synthesis	2%	2%
elaboration	19%	38%
evaluation	8%	10%
explanation	29%	20%
conclusion	20%	10%
interpretation	15%	16%
application	8%	4%

Table 7. Sources of Participants' Comments

	Student Teachers	Teachers
prior knowledge of self	36%	44%
prior knowledge of text	4%	0%
text memory	47%	43%
text topic	7%	10%
text reading	6%	3%

Increased understandings about multiculturalism were evidenced by everyone. The selected texts served as springboards for reflecting on and sharing personal experiences. By talking about the feelings, thoughts and actions of literary characters, participants gained insights about cultures of which they had previously had limited knowledge. They felt free to question the cultural experts without fear of being labeled racist because of their limited knowledge. This lack of fear freed participants to discuss cultural stereotypes, prejudices, and differences. With this sense of freedom came a heightened interest in learning more about these cultures. Many participants began to suggest additional cultural texts that they were reading outside of book club.

While everyone gained insights regarding cultures other than their own, student teachers more often than teachers talked about transforming these into actual classroom instructional practices. We believe this occurred because they were encouraged by the discussion leaders to do so. Although we did observe actual implementation of book clubs in some of the teachers' classrooms, they did not share this in book club discussions. We believe that they either viewed talk about classroom instruction as inappropriate for book club discussions or they viewed time spent in book club as their

personal time, not their "school time." In future book clubs with teachers, we intend to suggest the possibilities of instructional implementation as an appropriate topic for book clubs.

In addition to gaining insights about multiculturalism and the instructional applications of their insights, participants also developed an understanding of their own literacy processing. They talked about how their text understanding increased because of repeated readings, journal writings, and conversations with their peers. They talked about how cultural experts provided the needed prior knowledge that gives a cultural outsider the *cultural* lens needed to gain a deeper understanding of a *culture*-laden text. With these insights came an increased desire to continue to schedule a next semester of book club meetings.

Our fourth area of investigation was the communication procedures that the participants used during the book club sessions. All of the participants became more comfortable and more willing to share their insights as the sessions progressed. As one teacher noted: *At first, I didn't know what to talk about. I didn't know the rules. I sat there silently for most of the first session, but I was listening and watching real hard. I realized no one was going to bite my head off so I started talking . . . maybe too much right away. But then I settled down and listened harder and found myself very comfortable talking or not talking. I loved hearing what everyone else had to say.*

Both groups, the teachers and student teachers, expanded upon each others' comments with great regularity. All participants wanted to be a vital part of the conversation, challenging worn positions and generating new ideas and insights about the literature as well as about themselves as teachers and human beings. The communication procedures that separated the groups were maintaining and responding. The teacher group tended to be able to maintain the conversation about specific texts more frequently than the student teachers and they more frequently entertained alternative interpretations within a text. Conversely, the student teachers more frequently tried to draw conclusions about the meaning of a story than the teachers. In general, the student teachers' comments during discussions paralleled the comments of the secondary students in Marshall's (1989) studies. They were quick to conclude and slow to accept ambiguity about interpretations.

Author Note. The terms teacher and inservice teacher are used interchangeably throughout this paper. The terms student teacher and preservice teacher are also used interchangeably throughout the paper.

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